



International Whaling Commission

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CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE IWC.SC.6

Scientific Committee Meeting Agenda

The Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee, Rule B.2, require that "The provisional agenda for the Committee meeting shall be circulated for approval 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the Committee and comments will be considered only if received by the Chairman 21 days prior to the beginning of the Annual Meeting."

Mr. J.L. Bannister, Chairman of the Scientific Committee, has prepared the enclosed draft agenda and notes for the Annual Meeting to be held in Muscat, Oman, 27 April - 9 May 1998. Any comments on this agenda or proposals for additions should reach him by **6 April 1998**.

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Members of the Committee are reminded of the booking information for hotels in Oman which was distributed on 13 January 1998 [ref: RG/JAC/27018 (IWC.ALL.3)].

Dr. R. Gambell
Secretary to the Commission

DRAFT

**INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION, 50TH MEETING
SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING**

Muscat, Oman, 27 April-9 May 1998

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Chairman's welcome and opening remarks (N)¹
2. Adoption of agenda (N)
3. Arrangements for the meeting
 - 3.1 Appointment of rapporteurs
 - 3.2 Meeting procedures and time schedule (N)
 - 3.3 Establishment of sub-committees (N)
 - 3.4 Computing arrangements
4. Review of available data, documents and reports
 - 4.1 Documents submitted (N)
 - 4.2 National progress reports on research (N)
 - 4.3 Data collection, storage and manipulation (N)
 - 4.3.1 Catches and other statistical material
 - 4.3.2 Progress of data coding projects
 - 4.3.3 Progress on program verification projects
 - 4.3.4 Whale marking, including artificial and natural marks
5. Cooperation with other organisations (N)
 - 5.1 CMS
 - 5.1.1 ASCOBANS
 - 5.1.2 ACCOBAMS
 - 5.2 ICES
 - 5.3 IATTC
 - 5.4 CCAMLR
 - 5.5 NAMMCO
 - 5.7 UNEP
 - 5.8 Southern Ocean GLOBEC
 - 5.9 Other
6. Committee objectives and priorities (N)
 - 6.1 Amendments to the Rules of Procedure
 - 6.2 1997/98 work plan and initial agenda for the 1999 meeting
7. Comprehensive Assessment - Revised Management Procedure (CA/RMP) - General issues
 - 7.1 CLA program and tuning - report of the intersessional WG (Hammond)
 - 7.2 Additional variance
 - 7.3 Abundance estimation
 - 7.3.1 Report of the intersessional group on statistical estimators (Palka)
 - 7.3.2 IWC-DESS
 - 7.4 RMP - Documentation for future possible Schedule amendment (N)

¹ (N) = see Chairman's Annotations, attached

8. CA/RMP - Preparations for implementation
 - 8.1 Questions relating to Implementation Trials (Butterworth)
 - 8.2 North Pacific minke whales
 - 8.2.1 Progress on Implementation Trials
 - 8.2.2 Uncertainty over catches
 - 8.2.3 Sightinga survey planning - report of intersessional WG (Smith)
 - 8.3 North Atlantic minke whales
 - 8.3.1 Northeastern Stock - report of intersessional group (Polacheck); survey permits
 - 8.3.2 Central Stock - reconsideration of earlier estimates; concerns over data availability
 - 8.4 Southern Hemisphere minke whales (N)
 - 8.5 Western North Pacific Bryde's whales
 - 8.5.1 Trial specifications - report of the intersessional WG (Punt)
 - 8.5.2 Sightings survey planning - report of the intersessional WG (Smith)
9. Comprehensive Assessment of whale stocks (N)
 - 9.1 Southern Hemisphere blue whales
 - 9.1.1 Assessments
 - 9.1.2 Reports of the SOWER cruises
 - 9.1.3 Other
 - 9.2 Right whales
 - 9.2.1 Report of the Cape Town workshop
 - 9.2.2 Action arising
 - 9.3 Southern Hemisphere humpback whales
 - 9.3.1 Progress in catch and marking data coding
 - 9.3.2 Establishment of centralised Southern Hemisphere directory and Antarctic catalogue
 - 9.3.3 Progress towards assessment
 - 9.3.4 Future special meeting
 - 9.4 North Atlantic humpback whales
 - 9.5 North Pacific humpback whales
 - 9.6 Sperm whales
 - 9.6.1 Report of the intersessional group (Brownell) (N)
 - 9.6.2 Action arising
 - 9.7 Other species and/or stocks (N)
 - 9.8. Other issues
 - 9.8.1 Future SOWER cruises - report of intersessional group (Kato)
 - 9.8.2 Acoustics - report of intersessional correspondence group (Fox)
 - 9.8.3 Mathematically-based techniques for recognition analyses
 - 9.8.4 Biopsy sampling - collection of behavioural data - report of intersessional group (Clapham)
10. Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Management Procedure (AWMP)
 10. 1 Action arising from 1997 meeting and Commission's considerations (N)
 10. 2 Future work
11. Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Stock Assessments
 - 11.1 Bowhead whales
 - 11.1.1 Bering-Chukchi- Beaufort Seas Stock
 - 11.1.1.1 Assessment
 - 11.1.1.2 Management advice
 - 11.1.2 Other stocks
 - 11.2 North Pacific gray whales
 - 11.2.1 Eastern stock
 - 11.2.1.1 Current status, including stock monitoring - report of the intersessional group (Brownell)
 - 11.2.1.2 Management advice
 - 11.2.2 Western stock
 - 11.3 West Greenland fin whales (N)
 - 11.4 West Greenland minke whales
 - 11.5 East Greenland minke whales
 - 11.6 Humpback whales off St Vincent and the Grenadines

12. Environmental concerns (N)
 - 12.1 Pollutants
 - 12.1.1. Future activities/proposed meeting
 - 12.2. Climate Change
 - 12.2.1 Planning activities
 - 12.2.1.1 IWC/GLOBEC joint survey (SOWER 2000)
 - 12.3. Other activities
 - 12.3.1 Future workshop - report of the intersessional group (Reilly)
 - 12.3.2 SOWER cruise activities
 - 12.4. Arctic issues
13. Small cetaceans
 - 13.1 Action arising from the 1998 meeting, including report of intersessional group on North Sea harbour porpoise stock hypotheses (Bravington)
 - 13.2 Small cetaceans in the Indian Ocean and Red Sea, with special reference to the Middle East
 - 13.3 Future topics
14. Scientific permits
 - 14.1 Advice on the effect on stock(s) of scientific permit catches (N)
 - 14.2 Review of results from existing permits
 - 14.2.1 Japan - Southern Hemisphere
 - 14.2.2 Japan - North Pacific
 - 14.3 Review of new or revised proposals
15. Whalewatching
 - 15.1 Action arising from 1997 meeting, including Commission's response (N)
 - 15.2 Priority items (N)
 - 15.2.1 Review of guidelines
 - 15.2.2 Assessment of short term reactions
 - 15.2.3 Comparative studies
 - 15.2.4 Report from Monkey Mia, Western Australia
 - 15.2.4 Other matters
 - 15.3 Action arising
16. Whale sanctuaries (N)
17. Research proposals
 - 17.1 Review research results from 1997/98 (N)
 - 17.2 Review proposals for 1997/98 (N)
18. Data processing and computing needs for 1998/99
19. Funding requirements for 1998/99
20. Communications (N)
21. Publications
22. Election of officers
23. Other business
24. Adoption of report

Chairman's Annotations

The meeting will begin at 9 am sharp on Monday 27 April. As usual, the first session will be devoted to at least Agenda Items 1-4 and as much as possible of Item 5. The rest of the first day will be devoted to reading documents and a review of the meeting schedule by the Convenors.

The morning of day two, 28 April, will include brief (ca 15 minute) organisational meetings of Sub-committees, followed by further reading of documents for the rest of the day.

As at SC49 (in Bournemouth) 13 days are available for the meeting. I intend again to set aside one day as a "rest" day. Assuming, as last year, that days 3-9 are set aside for sub-committee business, there will then be three remaining days for completing our business, including preparing an agreed report.

Again as last year, I intend to include some "plenary" items between sub-committee business during days 3-9, and expect to schedule the "rest" day following the first day of plenary discussions, ie on day 11 - but that will depend on progress to that time.

As agreed at SC49 (SC Report - IWC/49/4 - Item 17.3) the convenors reviewed the 1997/8 work plan at a meeting on 12 October, and decided that the following should be given priority for work at this meeting:

1. Continued development of the Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Management Procedure (AWMP)
2. Bowhead whale assessment
3. RMP, especially North Pacific.

They also agreed that the Secretariat's data-processing and computing priorities should be:

1. Tuning of the RMP CLA program
2. AWMP-related tasks
3. North Pacific minke whale trials.

In the course of reviewing proposals for Invited Participants (following the procedure agreed at SC49, see IWC/49/4 Item 17) it became clear that the available funding would not support all those proposed, indeed the proposed expenditure was some 50% more than the budgeted amount. As a result some difficult decisions have had to be made. Bearing in mind the agreed priorities, it has not been possible to endorse proposals to fund attendance of persons proposed especially for some items, for example humpback assessments (Agenda Item 9.3) and mathematically-based techniques for whale recognition (9.8.3). The question of priorities, who should be invited to assist us in dealing with them, the number of days necessary for our meetings and the length of time Invited Participants should be asked to participate, are among concerns we need to address under Agenda Item 6.2.

Detailed notes on the Agenda are:

2. The draft has been restructured to reflect the priorities and concerns referred to above. The Committee's Objectives and Priorities have themselves been brought to the forefront of our discussions to follow immediately after the normal "review" items (ie 1-5), and there has been some re-arrangement of subsequent items.

3.2. See comments above, also 3.3 below.

3.3. The following four sub-committees for SC50 were agreed by the Convenors after SC49 (on 12/10/97):

- . "RMP Group" (RMP - convenor: Hammond). This will include the former "NP Trials Group" and "AE" - the latter becoming a service group to be subsumed within "Management" and including the current RMP
- . *Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling* (AS - Walloe) - with the bowhead whale assessment as its main task
- . *Other Great Whales* (OGW - Zeh) - to include Southern Hemisphere humpbacks and computerised photo-matching
- . *Whale watching* (WW - Kato).

These are in addition to the two Standing Working Groups (SWG)
. *Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Management Procedure* (AWMP - Bannister)
. *Environmental concerns* (E - Reilly)

and the Standing Sub-committee on *Small Cetaceans* (SC - Martin).

I shall be discussing with the Convenors how best to allocate time to the work of each of the above, given the agreed priorities.

4.1. Members are reminded of the submission rules, viz Rule E.

4.2. See SC49 Report item 4.2.

4.3. Will be discussed in relation to the items listed last year (SC49 Table 5) and the priorities set.

5. Listed are those where there has been action since the last meeting. Additional items can be dealt with under 5.9.

6. As last year I see this as high priority and will want to see initial discussions early in the meeting.

6. 1 is where we come to final decisions on our amendments to the Rules of Procedure discussed at SC49, for forwarding to the Commission for formal adoption. It will include the new procedure for IPs. Under 6.2, *inter alia* I would expect to see discussion of the matters raised in the final sentence of my preamble to these notes.

7.4. Has been included so we are prepared in the event that the Commission adopts the RMS, and we therefore have an agreed form of words to be inserted as the RMP, as is being discussed by the intersessional group (Donovan).

8.4 The Commission made no specific comment on our conclusion last year. This item is therefore retained on the agenda, but will not be discussed substantively.

9. This includes humpback whales (9.3 - now included in the work of the OGW sub-committee)

9.6. Will allow for discussion foreshadowed last year on the current state of knowledge of sperm whales in preparation for a future stock assessment.

9.7. North Atlantic fin whales could be considered here, but see item 11.3.

10.1. Will include the three items the Commission's report refers to for further consideration - stability of catch limits, hunting strategies, comparison of RMP and AWMP.

11.3. At SC49 we agreed that population structure and abundance must be more thoroughly understood before the Comprehensive Assessment process begun in 1991 can continue.

12. This has been structured to reflect last year's discussions and the Commission's Resolution 1997-7.

14.1 Has been retained on the agenda pending further documentation becoming available.

15.1 Will include a review of Carlson's update of national and regional guidelines.

15.2 is in response to last year's agreement that "all items be retained on SC agenda" ie items 16.2.1-16.2.4 from SC 49 report.

16. The Commission again provided no comment on this question last year, but since it agreed to retain the item ("Southern Ocean Sanctuary") on its agenda, the item has been retained here.

17. 1. Should include SOWER cruise results even though these will also be covered elsewhere. The Vice Chair's group will report as usual under 17.2, and will include a proposal carried over from SC49, being considered by the E SWG intersessionally.

20. Is to allow review of the email arrangements being tried out intersessionally.